

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #47

This announcement opens additional waters in the Coghill and Northern districts for commercial fisheries scheduled to take place in these districts on Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6. An aerial survey of the Coghill and Northern districts was flown on Friday, August 4 under good conditions. Wild stock escapement indices in these districts are tracking with anticipated numbers at this time.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District, including waters of the Esther Subdistrict and Granite Bay Subdistrict, WNH THA and SHA up to a line of buoys in front of the barrier net, and including the Bettles Bay Subdistrict, will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Sunday, August 5. **Waters inside the Bettles Bay, Hummer Bay and Pigot Bay Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) Markers will be closed for this fishing period.**

The Coghill District, including waters of the Esther Subdistrict and Granite Bay Subdistrict, WNH THA and SHA south of 60° 47.78' N., and including the Bettles Bay Subdistrict, will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 14-hour period starting at 6:00 am on Monday, August 6. Waters of the WNH SHA north of 60° 47.78' N. are being closed for the August 6 fishing period at PWSAC's request. **Waters inside the Bettles Bay, Hummer Bay and Pigot Bay SHTF Markers will be closed for this fishing period.**

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District, including the Perry Island Subdistrict, Cannery Creek Subdistrict, CCH THA and SHA will open to commercial fishing for daily 14-hour periods, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6. **Waters of the Cannery Creek Subdistrict, excluding waters inside of the SHTF Markers in Jonah Bay and Siwash Bay, will be OPEN to fishing during these periods.**

All regulatory closed waters within Hidden Bay, west of 148° 06.40' W., will not be in effect for these fishing periods. **Anadromous stream closures will not be in effect in the CCH THA and SHA during these fishing periods. Waters inside of the Salmon Harvest Task Force Markers in Long Bay, Granite Bay, Cedar Bay, Siwash Bay and Jonah Bay will be closed to fishing during these periods.** Waters of the CCH Hatchery Escapement Exclusion Zone (HEEZ) within the SHA will be closed during the August 6 fishing period at PWSAC's request. The CCH HEEZ consists of the waters of the CCH SHA north and east of a line from 61° 00.97' N., 147° 32.62' W. southward to a point on the shore at 61° 00.44' N., 147° 31.50' W. This exclusion zone protects potential broodstock fish staging along the tidal flats in front of Cannery Creek.

As a reminder, **all salmon that are harvested but not sold by commercial permit holders in Alaska waters must be reported on a fish ticket at the time of landing** (5AAC 39.130(c)(10)). Fish tickets have a "not sold/personal use" field to report these salmon.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Monday, August 6. Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.